

March 18, 2002

**In the Matter of Taxicab Driver's
License #03768, held by Wondwossen
Gebre Meskel, 1825 South 5th St. #6
Minneapolis, MN 55454**

**Findings of Fact
Conclusion and
Recommendations**

This matter came before the Licenses and Consumer Services Division (LCS) at a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) hearing held March 1, 2002 in room 1-C of City Hall. Mr. Meskel was present and represented himself. Also present were Deputy Director Clara Schmit-Gonzalez; License Inspector Vu Tran; Taxicab driver Lori A. Schwerin and Ahmed Hussein; and a taxicab customer, Mr. Roderick L. Ward. Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Licenses and Consumer Services Division makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

- 1) Mr. Meskel is currently a holder of Minneapolis Taxicab Driver's License #03768 and has been driving taxicab for seven years.
- 2) He has numerous written complaints coming from customer as well as from other taxicab drivers.
- 3) It was the accumulation of all the complaints in the past year that brought about this technical advisory committee hearing.
- 4) On June 12, 2001 in a verbal dispute with another taxicab driver at a downtown taxicab stand, a Blue & White taxicab driver observed Mr. Meskel threw his cup of coffee all over the other driver.
- 5) On January 9, 2002 he was reported to have jumped in line at the downtown taxicab stands. The complainant stated Mr. Meskel has been constantly doing this at various downtown cab stands.
- 6) On January 24, 2002 while driving his taxicab he provoked a Blue & White taxicab driver by the gestured of his middle finger as he drove passed him. The complainant stated Mr. Meskel has been doing this for two weeks.
- 7) On February 13, 2002, an AYS taxicab driver filed a written complaint against Mr. Meskel for speeding and driving recklessly when he cut in front of him almost causing an accident. A traffic accident report in 1995 yield Mr. Meskel while operating his taxicab, drove recklessly and crashed into four parked vehicles.
- 8) The most recent incident occurred on February 20, 2002 where Mr. Meskel refused a fare at the Marshall Fields taxicab stand.

- 9) At the hearing, Blue & White taxicab driver Lori Schwerin testified that other drivers often made fun of Mr. Meskel's disability.

CONCLUSIONS

1. For throwing his cup of coffee at another taxicab driver Mr. Meskel has violated City of Minneapolis Taxicab Ordinance section 341.250 (c).
2. For constantly jumping in line at a cabstand, Mr. Meskel has violated Minneapolis Taxicab Ordinance section 341.220.
3. For provoking and gesturing the middle finger at another taxicab driver, Mr. Meskel has violated Minneapolis Taxicab Ordinance section 341.250 (c).
4. For careless driving while in his taxicab and crashing into four parked vehicles in downtown back in 1995, Mr. Meskel was issued a citation from a Minneapolis Police Traffic Officer.
5. For refusing a taxicab fare, Mr. Meskel has violated Minneapolis Taxicab Ordinance section 341.250 (q).
6. In the Technical Advisory Committee Hearing, Mr. Meskel expressed his apology and commitment to improve his behavior toward other taxicab drivers and customers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the recommendation of the Division of Licenses and Consumer Services that:

- 1) Mr. Meskel will attend and complete an anger management course from a reputable organization.
- 2) To curb his interaction with other taxicab drivers, Mr. Meskel will not use the downtown taxicab stands and concentrate working the radio calls until he has completed his anger management course.
- 3) Mr. Meskel will pay an administrative fine of three hundred dollars (\$300.00) to the City of Minneapolis Finance Department.
- 4) Mr. Meskel will be call out-of-service for one week. Since he has been on hold since February 20, 2002, this will be credited toward the one-week suspension.
- 5) Mr. Meskel understands that this is his final chance as a Minneapolis taxicab driver. By signing his name below he has

agreed to the recommendations of this agreement and that any violation to this agreement will be grounds for revocation proceedings of his Minneapolis taxicab driver's license.

I have read the Technical Advisory Committee's Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations. I understand and agree to the recommendations contained herein and understand this agreement is subject to the approval of the City Council. I further agree that any violation of this agreement may result in the suspension or revocation of my Minneapolis Taxicab Driver's License and or Vehicle License.

Signature, Mr. Wondwossen Gebre Meskel

Date

Witness

Date